ON THE ROAD TO MANDALAY

THE FLYING FISHES HAVE FLOWN FROM RANGOON,

But Elephants Still Haul Teakwood in the Slushy, Squudgy Creek—In Most Ways Rangoon Is as Up to Date as a Federation of Women's Clubs.

All of us who were singing "On the Road to Mandalay" a few years ago—and there were mighty few of us who let it alone vocally—will be a bit surprised to be informed that Rangoon, where the dawn comes up like thunder and other interesting things happen, looks to the approaching tourist like an up to date American business centre.

In fact, according to a writer in the *Southern Workman*, the capital of Burma has many American towns beat a mile in the civic improvement line. "Its electric lighted highways, all broad, neatly paved and well drained; its brilliantly illuminated boulevards, with rows of graceful, well trimmed trees bordering both sides; its blocks of buildings, all laid out after a carefully considered plan, showing little of architectural beauty but much of austere regularity, astonish the stranger.

"When you take into consideration the fact that Rangoon has a system of parks and parkways with beautiful shade trees, choice flowers and crystal lakes, artificial and natural, dotted about them and that it provides breathing spaces for people living in congested districts you cannot but form a good idea of the aliveness of the municipal corporation. A good horse carriage service, now being rapidly superseded by the trolley, makes transportation easy and cheap. The city has provided splendid schools and playgrounds. Yet sixty years ago Rangoon was a mere fishing village."

One item from Mr. Kipling's picture of Rangoon referred to the elephants hauling teakwood in "the slushy, squudgy creek." Well, they are still at it, working with wonderful precision and an apparent sense of responsibility. They don't try to soldier, never get in one another's way or mixed up with the machinery, no matter how cramped they may be for room.

Some of them take the teak logs which have been floated down the river and tow them ashore. Then they drag them to the sawmills, either rolling them with one foot while they walk on three, pushing them with their tusks or pulling them with a chain attached to a breast strap.

Inside the mill an elephant selects a log, picks it out with his tusks, kicks it up to the saw with his toes, then tying his trunk in a kind of knot around the log holds it against the teeth of the saw while it is made into boards, pushing aside to the outside slabs as they are cut off and adjusting the log to make boards of the proper thickness.

Then he piles the boards up neatly, standing off to examine the effect, and if he finds a board out of line carefully adjusting it. Sometimes a pair of elephants working together exchange peculiar grunts, as if they were giving and receiving directions.

They are used in Burma for various purposes. The young calves are ridden like horses, with a soft pad and stirrups. They are found especially valuable in bad country and may be ridden fifty or sixty miles a day. A tap on the side of the head, a slight pressure of the knee or a word whispered in the ear is all that is required to guide them.

It is not at all a difficult matter for an elephant in prime condition to outrun a fast horse, but they cannot jump. A deep ditch only six or seven feet wide is impassable to them.

Working elephants are in their prime when they are 25 years old. They are expensive to feed, it being declared in Rangoon that an elephant eats a quarter of his weight in feed every day. An average day's food for one is certainly 800 pounds.

Socially Burma is unlike other Oriental countries. Men and women—even young men and women—walk together in the streets and mingle in social gatherings. Courtship always precedes the marriage.

The Burmans are ardent lovers and when a young man and woman find that their parents do not approve of the match they usually repair to the woods and return after a day or two as man and wife, sure of parental forgiveness. Marriage among Burmans is an extremely simple affair. The only ceremony performed is the eating together out of the same bowl of rice. Usually a feast is given to the relatives and friends of the families concerned. No sacrifices are offered, no services are performed.

A woman is as much privileged to seek and obtain divorce as is a man. All that is required is to lodge a complaint of marital infelicity with the village elders. They make inquiries and seek to reconcile the couple. In most cases the family feud is ended by their intervention, but if conciliation is out of the question the marriage is annulled and a divorce is granted.

The Burman wears a smile on his countenance, laughs and looks upon life through rose colored spectacles. Both the women and the men wear rich hued silken clothes. But while there is gayety there is no indecorum or impropriety.

For women Burma is a little heaven on earth, if we are to believe enthusiastic writers. Mrs. Burman is ubiquitous. Jewelry stores containing untold wealth in pearls, rubies and other gems are in charge of women. Markets and fruit stalls are run by women.

At the railroad station a woman sells you the tickets and another one is ready to take dictation and to do your typewriting. Not long ago a woman stock broker died leaving a fortune which she had made herself. But the Burmese woman does not let business interfere with motherhood. She runs the shop with one hand and the children with the other.

When she marries the woman retains her own name and any property she may have inherited or acquired. When divorced she is expected to support her children, but this is no hardship for her, since she cared for them when she lived with her husband. The Burmese child rarely sees the father, but is brought up to look to its mother for guidance and support.

The Burmese woman takes a great interest in public affairs, and the portals of the University of Rangoon have been open to her for a number of years. Her intelligence, her beauty, her freedom from racial caste prejudice, all make her an acceptable bride in the eyes of foreigners who go to Burma.

Marriage with a foreigner means as a rule that she can live in plenty and comfort without working. Naturally she looks upon such a marriage with favor. The Burmans are of Mongolian origin, and consequently the Chinese and Burmese marriage produces a virile race. With this exception the intermixture of races in Burma has not proved desirable.

This is especially so in case of marriages between Europeans and Burmans. The offspring of such marriages are termed Eurasians, who unfortunately seem to be looked down upon both by fullblooded Europeans and Burmans.

Almost as difficult a problem as that of the Eurasian is the tobacco problem in Burma. Men, women and children smoke. The cheroot at which they almost incessantly puff is eighteen inches long and about a quarter of an inch in diameter. It is wrapped in a banana leaf, and its mouthpiece consists of bamboo. The Burman tobacco is so strong that only one-fourth of the filling of the cheroot consists of tobacco. The balance is a mixture of innocuous herbs.

If possible the Burman exceeds other Asiatics in hospitality. He is par excellence the host of Asia. Any stranger may stroll into a Burman dwelling and demand hospitality for at least three days. No remuneration is expected. Opposite a Burmese house one usually finds earthen pots of water placed for the use of the traveller, under a roof especially sheltered to shelter the water from the hot rays of the tropical sun. These pots are tightly covered with earthen lids, which protect the water from dirt and dust.

The social life of the Burmans is interesting in the extreme. They indulge in boxing matches, pony, bullock and boat races, cock fighting, splitting cocoanuts, snake charming and juggling. Chess and dominoes are the favorite games. Theatres are in great vogue. The plot of the play is usually somewhat monotonous, for almost invariably the hero is a prince of the blood royal the heroine is a princess, and the rustics from the villages figure as clowns and jesters.

The dancing, though different from what it is in the Occident, is not without interest to a Westerner. The motions of the dancers are graceful and spry. Burman amusements last days and nights. The best known secular festival is the pwe.

The entertainment is melodramatic. Comedy and tragedy are introduced, music and dancing are included. The plot of the play is flimsy. The performance includes tricks of clowns who are masters of their art and intensely amusing. The musical instruments in the orchestra consist of a circle of drums, gongs, trumpets and wooden clappers, and the music out-Wagners Wagner in its deafening noise.

Many religious festivals are celebrated. Probably the occasion when presents are distributed to the priests is the most interesting. The people bring their presents and pile them up outside an alley made of bamboo lattice work. One brings candles, another matches, another brass vessels, &c., as though some previous arrangement had been made as to just what each one shall give.

For the most part the donors are women, and all of them are dressed in their best. The monks, attended by a boy carrying a large basket, pass down the bamboo alley in single file, and each basket is filled with presents. A trio of masqueraders with faces blackened, dancing to comic music, follows the procession. Anything that has not been distributed to the priests is gathered up by them.

The Biggest Cracker.

From the Baker's Weekly.

The "kasabi" torta (we get our word "tart" from torta) of Hispan-America is the biggest regularly made cracker on earth, bigger than the special matzoths of Manhattan's Jew side, which, however, are only made for a short period in the year. It is made from the kasabi root and lightly fired in cakes about the size of a small parasol.

A cracker for a hat! Such indeed is sometimes the use made by the Latin peons of the kasabi torta when needing a temporary sun shade (sombrero). The torta is always made bowl shaped so it can be balanced on the head without any particular effort—and providing no wind interferes. Rain, however, quickly soaks and collapses this singular edible headgear.

Stopped in Time.

From the Philadelphia Record.

Congressman John T. Lenahan of the Luzerne bar was once engaged in a bribery case and was questioning a prominent witness. "Have you yourself ever refused a bribe?" he asked. "No, but——" "That's all!" thundered John. Later on Mr. Lenahan was asked why he dismissed the witness so soon. "Because," he replied, "I knew by the 'but' that he was going to tell me no one had ever attempted to bribe him."

First to Be Photographed.

From Tit-Bits.

To Lord Avebury, who recently celebrated his seventy-fifth birthday, belongs the honor of being the first person in England to be photographed.

M. Daguerre brought his famous discovery to London and showed it to Lord Avebury's father. To demonstrate its value the inventor "assassinated" the present peer, who was then a mere child.

A SERVANT IN INDIA.

Always a "Boy"—His Chief Characteristics—Value of Recommendations.

From the Pall Mall Magazine.

They have a servant problem in India, and it is quite as big as the problem we have in England. If you are accompanied by your wife then it is quite necessary the mem-sahib should have her "ayah." To endeavor to go through the East without this chocolate colored bodyguard is to stamp yourself as either mean or else untutored in ways Oriental. If you are a resident, and it does not matter in how humble a position, your bungalow is overrun with attendants. You are waited on hand and foot; but the custom means bondage of a peculiarly irritating character, since privacy virtually is non est.

Every manservant in India is a "boy." He may be 70 years of age, bent and white haired, but he is always a "boy." Every waiter, every coolie, in fact everybody native, is "boy," except those who are reputed to be able to read or write English and insist upon being called "babu." After a little while the European contracts a disease called the "boy" fever. The luxury of being waited on hand and foot is irresistible. The most insipid of Englishmen soon learn to yell "B-o-o-o—y!" in that deep and choleric tone which is so fashionable and which is supposed to have been invented by the earliest members of John Company.

To the seasoned Anglo-Indian every boy is a born liar and thief. He is accepted as such ipso facto. To the newcomer this attitude toward our "black brother" is incomprehensible. After a season in India the newcomer knows why and invariably is more bitter in his race partisanship than the older resident. I do not wish to suggest that all boys are incorrigibly dishonest; I have heard, usually at third or fourth hand, of the existence of an honest boy, but I have seen none.

I was very innocent when I engaged my first boy, but then I had been only twenty-four hours in India. I was charmed with his appearance. His white clothes and turban were spotless. He was tall and handsome. His salaam was ecstatic, and he wanted only twenty-five rupees a month if he stayed in Bombay or thirty rupees if he travelled.

His "chits," or testimonials were beautiful. Generals, Majors, Captains and all sorts of high military functionaries, as well as a large number of travellers, had enjoyed the services of Behwar, as he was called, and all said what sorrow it gave them to part with him and with what pleasure they recommended him to another wandering sahib.

For two days he was as faithful as a dog. On the morning of the third he informed me he was married and had quite a lot of children. As it was my intention to go up country, would the sahib allow poor Behwar three months salary in advance so that he could leave provision for his family. As I have said, I was very innocent, and the "boy" was so charming. I advanced him his salary and an hour later India had swallowed him up, never to be seen by me again.

The next applicant for the post was a little Madrasi, whose face was one perpetual smile. He spoke very little English, but he was armed with a bundle of chits of which he was abnormally proud. The first read something like this: "The bearer of this is a splendid menteur. He is a most admirable voleur. He has served me with great improbity, and I sincerely trust he will speedily obtain a situation aux enfers."

Father's Approval.

From the Washington Star.

"What do you think of my graduation essay?" asked Miss Clarissa Cornforsel.

"Well," answered her father, "I must say you're ahead of your brother Josh. It's easier to understand than a college yell."

The Swordfish Season.

From the Boston Transcript.

From this time onward the swordfish will live a precarious life, for this noon the first of the swordfish fleet got away, the schooner Valentinna, which fitted out at T wharf. Another schooner is slated to start to-night, and in a few days a good sized fleet will be patrolling the waters all the way from Edgartown, Block Island, on the south to Cape Shore on the north.

The territory embraced is somewhat more extensive than usual on account of the backwardness of the season. This means that the fish are not getting into the more southerly waters as early as customary. The swordfish are harpooned, and many exciting contests have been waged between men in dories and the fish with the sharp point.

Weed Cutting by Motor Boat.

From the London Globe.

In Egypt an enormous amount of trouble and expense has been caused by the weeds and other vegetable growths which spread so rapidly as to choke canals and other waterways in a few days.

Clearing by hand has been found impossible in one district, so a motor boat has been equipped with a unique weed cutter and placed in service. The cutting attachment consists of a pair of V shaped knives with sharp and powerful blades, worked by belt from the propeller shaft. They trail along the bottom of the waterway, cutting the growth off at the roots. It is said that the little boat will clear as much as five acres an hour.

Connecticut Man's Pet Fawn.

Bolton correspondence Hartford Courant.

C. M. Pinney is probably the only man in the State who has a pet doe. The doe is two days old. Mr. Pinney's man was returning from South Manchester Tuesday when he noticed a small creature in a ditch. Upon investigation he found it to be a baby doe not more than a day old.

The little doe was nearly dead. He took it home and Mrs. Pinney cared for it. The doe was doing nicely to-day and will be brought up as a pet, the game warden having given his permission. The doe is of a reddish color with white spots and is about the size of a cat.